

White House Grounds Intruder

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A suburban Washington man who claimed he was armed with explosives rammed his car through the closed northwest gate of the White House yesterday morning and kept police and Secret Service agents at bay for four hours only a few feet from the front door of the White House.

The incident ended peacefully at 11:01 a.m. without harm to anyone as the man surrendered following a radio broadcast of his desire to speak with the Pakistani ambassador. His "explosives" proved to be highway

flares and other nonexplosive equipment.

President Ford and his family were spending the Christmas holidays in Colorado, which a Secret Service spokesman cited as one reason for a "compassionate" response by security officials. It was the second time in less than a year that the White House grounds has been forcibly breached.

Authorities identified the man as Marshall Hill Fields, 25, of 8724 Woodland Dr., Silver Spring. A former taxicab driver, he was taken to St. Elizabeths Hospital, where he was committed by the Secret Service for observa-

tion. Fields, whose dark brown two-door Chevrolet bore a silver license plate with black Arabic characters instead of a standard license plate, had himself referred to in the broadcast as Abdul Rahim.

Persons who know Fields said yesterday that his behavior had become erratic since his father—an official with the U.S. Agency for International Development who had served in Arabic speaking countries—died last May. Fields wore some Arab-style clothing yesterday and at one point spoke to officials in Arabic, which he had apparently learned while living abroad with his father.

At 10:58 a.m., WHUR, Howard University's radio station, broadcast Fields' message: "Abdul wants the Pakistani ambassador to know that he is operating under very unusual circumstances and asked to speak with him immediately." Fields monitored the broadcast on his car radio and gave himself up to the executive protective service, which is charged with guarding the White House grounds, within minutes after the broadcast.

According to police, Fields was driving his car on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue past the White House about 7 a.m. when he made what at first appeared to be a U-turn. Instead

of completing the turn, however, Fields drove his car through the closed tearing the right-hand gate from its hinges and carrying it about 20 feet. No shots were fired at Fields, according to Secret Service spokesman George Cosper.

Cosper said that the executive protective service could have taken stronger action but "we had an empty White House on Christmas Day. We have some compassion."

Fields was allowed to come within about 20 feet of the north portico of the White House, the familiar colonial entrance dominated by four, two-story Ionic columns. Two uniformed police-

men could be seen on the portico training rifles on Fields, who was wearing a white top and hood resembling Arab headgear.

According to Earl Drescher, the chief of the executive protective service who arrived at the White House at about 7:30 a.m., Fields at first spoke in Arabic, leaving the impression that he could not speak English well. After an interpreter was brought to the White House, Drescher said, Fields spoke in English.

Drescher began three hours of conversation with Fields. In all their dis-

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cussion, Drescher said, Fields "never did say what he really wanted." Much of the conversation, according to Drescher, was about Fields' views about Islam "and if you want my own opinion, I'd say he was trying to gain recognition for his Islamic views."

Drescher said that Fields told him several times that he had explosives and said, "For the safety of the White House you better do what I request." But we never did get more out of him until out of the blue he said he wanted to talk to the Pakistani ambassador.

By then it was about 10 a.m. and Drescher said he told Fields that it would be difficult to get the ambassador on Christmas day. Then, Drescher said, Fields suggested that Drescher call WHUR-FM, the Howard University radio station, and ask the station to announce that he wanted to speak to the ambassador.

After Drescher did this at 10:35 a.m., he said Fields told him, "If I hear the announcement, I'll disarm myself." While they were waiting, Drescher said, Fields "asked me how my Christmas was, and I said it really hadn't started yet." Fields turned on his car radio and opened the door so that he could hear it.

Throughout the conversation, Fields held a wire in his left hand attached to the cylinder around his waist. Two other cylinders were attached to his knees with silver colored tape. All three proved to be highway flares. Two duffle bags were at his feet and a gas mask was hanging from his waist.

At 10:58 a.m., the station made the announcement. Fields waved a white flag, then took the devices off his body, put them on the ground in front of him and held his arms outstretched.

Drescher came up to him slowly with his own arms outstretched. Then he searched Fields as other police officers surrounded them, and Fields walked with police down the White House driveway to the guardhouse at the northwest gate.

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Fields was taken to St. Elizabeths for observation without any charges being placed against him under a civil procedure that allows the Secret Service to commit a person who may be a danger to himself or to any of the service's "protectees," according to a spokesman.

Drescher said the EPS never tried to reach the Pakistani ambassador, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan.

An embassy spokesman said Khan eventually heard about the request at noontime when reporters telephoned to ask questions about it. The spokesman, Mohammad Iqbal Butt, said Ambassador Khan would not see Fields. "He is not a Pakistani national," Butt said. "It's something that is entirely within United States' jurisdiction."

Butt said that as far as embassy officials know, Fields has never been in Pakistan. He said he had no idea why Fields wanted to see the ambassador.

"We really can't go into his thoughts," Butt said.

Fields' mother, Florence, who lived with her son in Silver Spring, was brought to the White House during the episode, according to Secret Service spokesman Cosper. Mrs. Fields did not speak to her son during the incident, Cosper said. She was reported to be under sedation yesterday and could not be reached.

According to another Secret Service spokesman, a file on Fields has been maintained by the Secret Service because "he was of protective interest to us. He came to our attention because we thought he could be a possible problem towards the people we protect." The service did not reveal its reason or when the file was opened.

The soldier, Robert K. Preston, later pleaded guilty to a charge of misappropriation of a military aircraft and breach of the peace. Preston was sentenced by the Army in August to a year at hard labor with credit for six months already served and fined \$200 of his \$398 monthly salary for one year.

Treasury Secretary William E. Simon said after yesterday's incident, "It was handled in the usual professional . . . manner the Secret Service handles problems."

Drescher said he was sure "there will be studies and evaluation of this incident." Other officials agreed that the incident would lead to a review of security provisions around the White House.

The Executive Protective Service is a uniformed force, supervised by the Secret Service, which protects the White House buildings and grounds as well as foreign embassies and missions in Washington.

The force, which now has 850 men, was known as the White House police until 1970.

The Secret Service itself is an agency of the Treasury Department, charged with protecting the president and vice president and their families. Its agents do not wear uniforms. This weekend the regular detail of Secret Service agents, which protects President Ford, was with the President and his family in Vail, Colo., where Ford is on a skiing vacation.

The last time a President was personally threatened inside his official residence was on Nov. 1, 1950, when two Puerto Rican nationalists attempted to attack President Harry S. Truman while he was staying in Blair House during the renovation of the White House.

Mr. Truman was not hurt during the incident, but one of the White House guards was slain and one of the assailants also died during the attack.

Also contributing to these stories were Washington Post Staff Writers Doug Brown, Lou Cannon and Alfred E. Lewis.

Cosper told reporters that Fields had "never become a direct threat to any of our protectees."

The last time that the White House grounds were forcibly breached occurred last Feb. 17, when an Army private who had flunked out of Army flight school commandeered a helicopter from Ft. Meade, Md., and landed it on the south lawn of the White House in a blaze of gunfire.